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INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT: Retirement of Maj. Gen. Luang Phisit Witaysakorn

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SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO. 25X1X

1. Capt. Wichit Ratanabhnu, personal aide to Phao Sriyanon, was instrumental in forcing the retirement of Maj. Gen. Luang Phisit Witayakarn, former head of the Central Investigation Division. Capt. Wichit claimed 60 percent of the 2,000,000 baht reward offered in the Gold Robbery Case*, on the grounds that he was present with Thai Army Capt. Kamol** when partial recovery of the gold was made. Allegedly, Wichit wanted the money to finance study abroad. However, Phisit thought that others, including one Capt. Sirichai***, also had legitimate claims.
2. Wichit, disregarding the counsel of Lt. Gen. Luang Chatrakan Kosol, who advised a solution satisfactory to the interests of the state, finally took his case to Phao. Phao personally issued Phisit's retirement order through Banyat Thephasadin, Acting Minister of Interior, with the signed approval of Lt. Gen. Prongyothi, Minister of Interior.
3. An additional factor in the retirement of Phisit was that Phao and Lt. Col. Lamai Utyanon, head of the Criminal Investigation Division, thought it timely to promote Pichit Thurakarn as a reward for being held accountable for the death of the four Cabinet Ministers on the Bangkok Death Ride.****
4. The retirement order came as a distinct surprise to the Police Department. It also added to existing uneasiness, since it became clear that Phao has the power to remove any member of the Police. Testimony as given at the questioning and later at the Criminal Court legally justified Phisit's retirement.
5. Following the ousting of Phisit, Luang Chatrakan submitted his resignation, but Phibul refused to accept it. It is felt that the Thai Police Department would be weakened should Chatrakan resign. No member of the 1947 Coup clique is thought capable of filling the job. Luang Pichit, who is a good policeman, lacks the diplomatic skill to be successful.

* 25X1A Comment. For further details on the Gold Robbery Case, in May 1948, and the activities of Phisit in connection with this case, See 25X1A

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 ** [REDACTED] Comment. Kamol was one of the Army officers who participated in the original theft.

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*** [REDACTED] Comment. There is no further identification of Capt. Sirichai.

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**** [REDACTED] contain information regarding the activities of Pichit and the murder of the Cabinet ministers.

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